



NEWS RELEASE

Office of the United States Attorney
Eastern District of Texas

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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FORMER SHERIFF'S DEPUTIES PLEAD GUILTY

(Sherman, Texas) Three former Cooke County sheriff's deputies have pleaded guilty to charges stemming from a federal investigation into civil rights violations in the Eastern District of Texas.

Matthew D. Orwig, United States Attorney for the Eastern District of Texas, commended the investigators for their thorough review of the case, "The federal agents were faced with the difficult task of investigating fellow law enforcement officers, however, the violation of civil rights by any party will not be tolerated in the Eastern District of Texas. We will continue to investigate and aggressively prosecute these claims of misconduct."

JUDD DAVID JONES, 29 of Gainesville, pleaded guilty to two civil rights violations. According to information presented in court, on April 17, 2003, while employed as a Deputy for the Cooke County Sheriff's Office, Jones used unreasonable force against an individual by kicking the person in the head and chest while he was in custody, which resulted in bodily injury to that person. On November 14, 2002, Jones, while employed as a Deputy Sheriff, used unreasonable force against another individual by striking the person in the head while he was in custody, also resulting in bodily injury.

JODY MARLIN LYONS, 30 of Gainesville, pleaded guilty to conspiracy to

make false statements, and making false statements, to the Federal Bureau of Investigation regarding his knowledge of civil rights violations. According to information presented in court, Jones admitted that he conspired with Jones to make false statements to an agent of the Federal Bureau of Investigation by denying that he had knowledge that Jones had violated the civil rights of several individuals. Lyons admitted that on April 17, 2003, he made false statements to an agent of the Federal Bureau of Investigation in connection with the November 14, 2002, assault by Jones, by stating that he transported the individual to the Cooke County Jail without incident, when he knew that Jones struck the individual prior to the transporting him to jail. Jones admitted that he made a false statement again on October 2, 2003, when he denied to an agent of the Federal Bureau of Investigation that the same individual had been physically assaulted by Jones on November 14, 2002.

MICHAEL JAMES, 31 of Cooke County, pleaded guilty to making false statements to an agent of the Federal Bureau of Investigation. Jones admitted that on March 23, 2004, when he was asked by an agent of the Federal Bureau of Investigation about his knowledge of civil rights violations by deputies of the Cooke County Sheriff's Office, he denied knowledge of the existence of any such instances. James admitted that he in fact had specific knowledge of instances of civil rights violations.

Jones faces up to 20 years in prison and fines of up to \$500,000. Lyons faces up to 15 years in prison and fines of up to \$750,000. James faces up to 5 years in prison and a fine of up to \$250,000. A sentencing date has not been set.

The case is being investigated by the Federal Bureau of Investigation and

prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorneys Joe Monsivais and Maureen Smith.